

Message Text

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12

ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OFA-01 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 L-02 EB-07

SCA-01 SCSE-00 H-02 INR-07 DLOS-05 PRS-01 CG-00

DOTE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 DODE-00 /076 R

DRAFTED BY ARA-LA/EP - JFKING:GFH

APPROVED BY ARA-LA/EP - JOHN F. KING

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R 121808Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

UNCLAS STATE 055253

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EC

SUBJECT: WH PRESS BRIEFING WITH RON NESSEN

1. FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE AT WHITE HOUSE PRESS
BRIEFING MARCH 11:

2. QUESTION: RON, YOU SAID YESTERDAY YOU WOULD CHECK
ON WHETHER THE PRESIDENT DISAGREES WITH GOVERNOR REAGAN'S
CONTENTION THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS DESERVE PROTECTION ON
THE HIGH SEAS.

MR. NESSEN: I DIDN'T SAY DISAGREE, DID I?

3. QUESTION: YOU SAID YOU WOULD CHECK. DOES THE PRESI-
DENT FEEL WE SHOULD GO ON TOLERATING THIS SEIZURE OF
132 OF OUR TUNA BOATS?

MR. NESSEN: THE SITUATION ON THE TUNA BOATS IS AS
FOLLOWS: ONE, THE UNITED STATES HAS PROTESTED TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF ECUADOR OFFICIALLY; TWO, THE UNITED STATES
IS ITSELF NEGOTIATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF ECUADOR

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ON THE ISSUE OF FISHING RIGHTS; THIRD, THE LAW OF THE

SEA CONFERENCE RECONVENES ON MONDAY IN GENEVA, AT WHICH
THIS ISSUE WILL BE DISCUSSED AND HOPEFULLY RESOLVED;

AND FOUR, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT WE HAVE THAT
ANY AMERICAN SHIPS THAT HAD BEEN LOANED OR SOLD TO THE
ECUADOREANS WERE USED IN THESE MATTERS.

3. QUESTION: IN THE EVENT THAT THIS IS NOT RESOLVED --
BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 13 YEARS -- WILL THE
PRESIDENT PROVIDE AMERICAN CITIZENS PROTECTION OF THE
UNITED STATES NAVY THAT THEY ARE PAYING FOR OR NOT?

MR. NESSEN: TWO THINGS. I WOULD RATHER NOT GO
ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE WILL
NOT RESOLVE THE ISSUE. SECONDLY, AS A GENERAL MATTER,
THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT BELIEVE IN ANYTHING THAT
WOULD EVEN SMACK OF GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY. INGERSOLL

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